proposal, that there was Lord Curzon's Committee on Shipping Control. But it was admitted that there was no special body outside the Board of Trade for dealing with the building of additional ships in this country and in America."

I explained in reply that I was aware of the splendid work of the Shipping Control Committee, and that it would be necessary for this Committee to continue its work under my scheme in order to assist the Director of Shipping, but the latter would have complete executive authority to an extent not vested in any one person at present.

Relation of Shipping Controller to Lord Curzon's Committee

I urged that no Committee could satisfactorily discharge executive functions, and that although I had every confidence in the capacity and energy of the chairman, he could not possibly find time for superintending both ships and our air service, each of these demanding the full energies of one man. I pointed out that the present system had not prevented the probability, according to the President of the Board of Trade, of a threatened breakdown next summer.

As success or failure in the War depended upon the maintenance of a sea transport equal to the essential needs of the Allies, I repeatedly urged the Prime Minister and the War Committee to set up a Ministry of Shipping with a Shipping Controller at its head, to deal with this vital problem. The Board of Trade resisted this diminution of

its authority, and the Prime Minister's well-known dislike for kicking along laggard colleagues with academic qualifications was growing on him. He always postponed the operation if it was suggested to him that a less drastic remedy would cure the evil. So the time went by, carrying with it every week